

active membership on the boards of the Boston chapters of the Naval Academy Alumni Association, the New England Advisory Committee of Business Executives for National Security, and the Patriots Squadron of the Association of Naval Aviation.

Mr. President, as a Naval Academy graduate and former naval aviator myself, I must concede that my respect for the service and professionalism of my friend Carl may be partially accountable to the parallels between his naval career and my own, although his subsequent decision to enter the private sector perhaps demonstrated more foresight than my own choice to enter politics and make my living at public expense.

But do not take my word as evidence of Carl's exemplary service to his country. The World War II Victory Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the Navy Occupation Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation, and the Vietnam Service Medal, all of which were awarded to Commander Buzzell during his naval career, stand as proof positive of his dedication to the core values that distinguish our servicemembers to the same degree today as when Carl enlisted in 1946, 1 year after victory in a most terrible war had confirmed the resilience of our ideals and the promise of the American Century.

Mr. President, Carl Buzzell lived a life whose end deeply saddens all of us who know of his loyal service to this Nation. May his legacy long stand in testament to the virtues of a life dedicated to honor, country, and family. ●

RECOGNITION OF GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD RECIPIENTS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity today to recognize Hilary A. Holmes of Girl Scout Troop 7756. Hilary is an outstanding young woman who has received the Girl Scout Gold Award from the Nyoda Girl Scout Council in Huron, SD. The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement award in U.S. Girl Scouting. This award exemplifies her outstanding feats in the areas of leadership, community service, career planning, and personal development.

Hilary is one of just 20,000 Gold Award recipients since the creation of the program in 1980. In order to receive this award, Hilary completed the many Gold Award requirements. She earned three interest project patches: the Career Exploration Pin, the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award and the Senior Girl Scout Challenge. Also, she created and executed a Girl Scout Gold Award project which included service to area flood victims.

Mr. President, I feel Hilary deserves public recognition for her tremendous service to her community and her country. I offer my congratulations to her for her hard work and effort in reaching this milestone. ●

STRAIGHT-A STUDENTS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate 4th grader Dallas Julianna Smolarek, 2d grader Candice Vaughn Smolarek, and kindergartener Brandon Tyler Smolarek for their outstanding academic success in the recent school year. All three students have received straight-A report cards and are on their way to success in school and all their personal endeavors.

We all agree over the importance of a good education, and I am pleased to see such fine young students maintaining a strong desire to perform to the best of their abilities. No doubt a role model for their classmates, Dallas, Candice, and Brandon have assumed academic leadership paralleled by few others. On behalf of the U.S. Senate, congratulations to them and best wishes for their future success. ●

RETIREMENT OF PAUL W. JOHNSON AS CHIEF OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, this week marks the end of Iowa native Paul Johnson's remarkable 4-year tenure as Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service at the Department of Agriculture. As a long-time farmer and conservationist, Paul brought to NRCS a bold vision of private lands as a national resource to be managed in harmony with the environment.

During the past 4 years, Paul guided his agency through a major reorganization, from the Soil Conservation Service to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and has shaped the agency's programs and policies to reflect this new emphasis on the conservation of all natural resources. Paul's leadership has inspired a new commitment to conservation both within USDA and across the country.

Paul's influence was obvious in the development of the landmark conservation title of the 1996 Farm Bill, which included among many important provisions the new Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The creation and implementation of these programs under Paul's direction are hallmarks of the energy, creativity, and commitment that he brought to NRCS, and of the legacy he leaves behind.

The agency's eloquent publication, "A Geography of Hope," is a visionary statement of the NRCS mission and testimony to Paul's farm roots and passion for the land. For 23 years on his farm in Decorah, IA, Paul has raised corn, hay, and Christmas trees, and had a dairy herd and sheep.

In our home State Paul is highly regarded as an architect of environmental legislation. As a representative in the Iowa General Assembly from 1984 to 1990, he authored the Iowa

Groundwater Protection Act, the Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection Program, the Iowa Energy Efficiency Act and the Iowa Integrated Farm Management Program. For his leadership in the State he was named conservation legislator of the year by several organizations in Iowa and was named to the Iowa Conservation Hall of Fame by the Wildlife Society.

Paul holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in forestry from the University of Michigan, where he also pursued doctoral studies in forestry. He taught forestry in Ghana for two years, and has been visiting professor of environmental policy at Luther College. Paul worked for the USDA Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest and also has studied and consulted on forestry, agriculture, environment, and energy issues in Honduras, Costa Rica, Sweden, and the former Soviet Union.

Paul served on the Board of Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences from 1988 to 1994, where he was involved in major studies in agriculture, forestry, and conservation. He also has served as an assistant commissioner for his local soil conservation district.

Paul brings both a global perspective and a local sensibility to conservation. While I am sorry to see him leave NRCS, I look forward to his return to Iowa, where he will continue to enrich our State. I would like to extend congratulations on a job well done, and wish Paul and his wife Pat the best on their return home. ●

TRIBUTE TO SOUTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I stand before you today to pay tribute to a truly outstanding university in my home State of Missouri, Southwest Missouri State University [SMSU]. SMSU was one of 135 schools in 42 States selected to the John Templeton Foundation Honor Roll, a designation recognizing colleges and universities that emphasize character building as an integral part of the college experience.

Being the only public institution in Missouri to earn the 1997-98 honor roll distinction, SMSU is also one of the eight State-funded schools to receive the award nationwide. Schools competing for the honor roll were judged on 5 criteria and out of 2,208 4-year accredited undergraduate institutions only the top few were chosen. One of the categories where SMSU stood out was in community service. During the 1996-97 school year the SMSU campus, including the faculty and students, volunteered more than 69,500 hours.

It is an honor for the entire State of Missouri to have a university like SMSU, whose service and character-building programs have earned it this distinguished award. I commend SMSU's President, Dr. John Keiser, for his commitment to excellence and hope for continued success in the future. ●